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BOOK REVIEWS

MY MEMORIES OF EIGHTY YEARS. By *Chauncey M. Depew*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Pp. 1-409. \$4.00.

Few Americans are in position, because of the richness and breadth of their experience in public life, to present a more adequate panoramic view of events and personalities in American history since the time of the Civil War than Mr. Depew.

He has known personally the chief leaders in finance, politics, and statesmanship, from Abraham Lincoln to Warren G. Harding. He has here related many interesting memories of Lincoln, Grant, Greeley, Hayes, Garfield, Cleveland, McKinley, Roosevelt, and others. His has been an unusual life in its contact with men who have molded the nation, and he has revealed in an engaging style the impress made upon his active mind by the outstanding figures in the period in which he himself took so large a part.

Moreover, he has brought to his task a rare combination of the seasoned judgment of an elder and the enthusiasm of a youth; for it is true, as his platform performances in late national conventions of the Republican Party have demonstrated, that Mr. Depew's heart has never grown old. Running through the pages of this book is no tired philosophy on the vanities of life; no unpleasant cynicism; not even the tendency to preachments common to the elders. On the contrary, there is zest, and hope, and faith in men and in the institutions of the land.

His comments on the great men and great events of the long period in which he was active in politics are, therefore, replete with enjoyment. They are a distinct contribution to the growing literature of personal experience that seems likely to add so greatly to the fund of information from which the historian of the future, as well as the current reader of the present, will measure the events of the last generation or so—a measurement, by the way, that is likely to be far more accurate than those which perforce have been made in other times from more rigid and formal documents.

Of course, there is in Mr. Depew's work, as in many another such work—notably that of Mr. H. H. Kohlsaat, now appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post*—a very discernible disposition to see himself as a central figure.

Thus, one gathers that he said the final word to Senator Platt that led to the nomination of Roosevelt for Governor of New York. He convinced Senator Platt, who did not like Roosevelt, that he should be nominated. Again, one gathers that it was due largely to the long-headedness and adroitness of Mr. Depew that Mr. Roosevelt was nominated for Vice-President at the Philadelphia convention. And one easily sees that if Mr. Roosevelt had not been nominated and elected governor, he would not have been nominated and elected Vice-President; and if he had not been put in the Vice-President's chair, to pass into the White House after the assassination of McKinley, he might well have never reached the White House—and there you are!

But these little self-appreciations should not prejudice one against the book. *Quien sabe?* Maybe Mr. Depew had as much to do with those pregnant happenings as he thinks he had. And anyway it is a most readable book. Let the reader turn to his chapter on that brilliant and towering "turkey-cock," Roscoe Conkling. Seldom will we find a more humanly interesting set of pages. Mr. Depew and Mr. Conkling became enemies. Mr. Conkling was the active force in the enmity. Mr. Depew pretends he does not know what caused Mr. Conkling to turn on him. It is evident that he thinks it was because on one occasion he, Depew, the story-telling, humorous platform performer, held a crowd away from Conkling, the great and dignified orator. But, for all that, there is an essential fairness and kindness as well as a sure understanding in the Conkling chapter that makes it worth while. And it is but typical of the pages that deal with Grant and Roosevelt, with McKinley and Platt, and with all the other notables of yesterday.

PEACEMAKERS, BLESSED AND OTHERWISE. By *Ida M. Tarbell*. The Macmillan Co., New York. Pp. 1-227. \$1.60.

This is a charming and stimulating little collection of what Miss Tarbell calls her "observations, reflections, and

irritations" at the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armament. She says they do not pretend to be an adequate review of the work of the conference, but just what she states them to be, and she explains that they were set down each week of the first two months of the conference and published by a syndicate practically as they appear in the book.

In all the large number of publicists of high and low degree who "covered" the Washington Conference, there were few more faithful in work and more independent in thought, and few shrewder in a gentle, rather whimsical way than Miss Tarbell; so it follows that when she puts on paper the thoughts that came to her, in careful moments and in light moments, the result is valuable. Many will differ from her conclusions on this or that. Her background was one of approval of the League of Nations, as well as of The Hague conventions, and she thinks "the present conference has boldly and nobly attempted to do in a limited field something of what the Paris Conference attempted to do for the whole world." There will be those who will not agree with reasonings having that background; but let them not thrust aside this little volume on that account.

For Miss Tarbell, friend of France, writes such things as this in describing the Briand speech before the conference: "All his powerful oratory, his wealth of emotional gesture, upraised arms, tossed black locks, rolling head, tortured features—all these M. Briand brought into play in his efforts to arouse the conference to share the fears of France. He could not do it. He was talking to people as well informed as himself on the actual facts in Europe, but people who are not interpreting those facts in the way that the French do." And again: "It was always a joy to see Mr. Hughes when he was righteously indignant, and he certainly was so on the afternoon of November 25. He lunged at once at the report of the break between himself and Mr. Balfour. The statement had no basis but the imagination of the writer. It was unjust to Mr. Balfour, who had been co-operative from the start. . . . There had been no clashes in committee, no quarrels. . . . It was a fine, generous, convincing answer to the ugly rumors, and the beauty of it was that you believed Mr. Hughes. You knew that he was not lying to you."

Still again, bearing in mind that Miss Tarbell is a League of Nations advocate, enjoy this little sidelight on Senator Lodge, making the famous speech in presenting the Four-Power Pact in which he waxed poetical about the Islands of the South Seas: "Article X read by Henry Cabot Lodge! Was the dramatist for the Conference for the Limitation of Armament also a great satirist? Surely you must search far in American history to find another scene so full of irony; . . . but I was incapacitated for appreciating his eloquence, for all I could see was the United States climbing into the League of Nations through the pantry window while Senator Lodge held up the sash."

THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND WORLD PEACE. By *the Hon. Newton W. Rowell, K. C., LL. D.* Oxford University Press, American Branch. Pp. i-xxiii, 1-307. Preface, table of contents, and appendices. \$3.50.

A series of able lectures delivered by Mr. Rowell in last November at the University of Toronto, under the Burwash Lectureship, Victoria College, has been put into an attractively printed and bound volume, substantially as they were delivered. They are an appreciable addition to the current discussion of international affairs. Mr. Rowell has been conspicuous in the affairs of the League of Nations, and has attracted general attention among those who have been following the work of the League. He is a believer in the League without being led to discount other efforts for peace and law in the world, such as the Washington Conference. The book is divided into four parts. The first part deals with international co-operation and world peace, with chapters on the League in history and the achievements of the League. The second part has to do with the British Empire and world peace, and is divided into four interesting chapters. The other two parts deal respectively with Canada and world peace and with the church and world peace. Included in the appendices are the treaty between Great Britain and Ireland, the Naval Treaty, and the Four-Power Treaty.